

## Message Text

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42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 RSR-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 IO-13 DPW-01 EUR-25 AID-20 /143 W

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R 311119Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5171

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

UNCLAS VIENTIANE 5336

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, MOPS, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: BANGKOK WORLD EDITORIAL ON LAOS AGREEMENT

1. JULY 30 ISSUE OF BANGKOK WORLD CARRIED FOLLOWING EDITORIAL  
ENTITLED "THE LAOS AGREEMENT.":

2. QUOTE. THE PEACE AGREEMENT IN LAOS IS A STEP, IF NOT A LEAP,  
FORWARD. IT HAS TAKEN FIVE MONTHS FOR IT TO BE REACHED -- FIVE  
MONTHS OF CIVIL WAR, FIVE MONTHS OF BOMBING. IT IS WITH THIS IN  
MIND THAT THE NEWEST TREATY MUST BE TREATED AS A WELCOME EVENT.

LAOS IS ONE OF THE MOST ARTIFICIALLY CREATED COUNTRIES IN THE  
WORLD. LEAVING THE FRENCH UNION IN 1956, HER THREE MILLION PEOPLE  
ARE MORE AWARE OF KINSHIP TO CLAN AND FAMILY THAN NATION. FORCING  
THEM TO DEFEND VAGUELY DEFINED CONCEPTS OF NATIONALISM AND INTER-  
NATIONALISM WAS ONE OF THE GREAT FOLLIES IN THE INDOCHINA  
CONFLICT. SO UNWARLIKE ARE THE LAOTIANS, IN FACT, THAT IN THE  
EARLY DAYS OF THE FIGHTING, AMERICAN OFFICIALS COMPLAINED THAT  
TROOPS WERE FIRING THEIR GUNS AT A THIRTY-DEGREE ANGLE BECAUSE  
THEY DIDN'T WANT TO KILL ANYTHING. THE SAME PASSIVITY EXTENDED  
TO THE USE OF HEAVY ARTILLERY. IT WAS ONLY AFTER THE AMERICANS  
PATIENTLY EXPLAINED THAT, SINCE THEY WEREN'T AIMING THE SHELLS  
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AT ANY PARTICULAR PERSON AND THUS WERE NOT PERSONALLY KILLING

THEM, DID THE ROYAL ARMY PURSUE THE ART OF WAR WITH ANY ENTHUSIASM.

THERE ARE THOSE, PERHAPS EVEN A MAJORITY, WHO VIEW THE PEACE AGREEMENT IN THE SAME LIGHT AS MOST OTHER PEACE AGREEMENTS, THAT IS, SOMETHING TO BE BROKEN AND VIOLATED BY BOTH SIDES WITH DEPRESSING REGULARITY. IF THIS HAPPENS IN LAOS, IT WILL BE FOOLISH FOR ALL. THE AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED IS FAIR. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO CLEAR WINNER OR LOSER. IF BOTH PARTIES ARE SINCERE IN EXPOUNDING PEACE, THEY CAN SURELY WORK TOWARD THAT GOAL NOW. IF THE COMMUNIST NEO LAO HAK SAT CHAFFED UNDER LOSING THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, THEY CAN WORK OUT AGRICULTURAL REFORM ANYWAY SINCE THEY CHOOSE MINISTERS FOR ECONOMY AND PLANNING. AND, WHILE THE VIENTIANE SIDE LOST THE POST OF MINISTER OF INFORMATION, THEY RETAIN THE VITAL MINISTRY OF DEFENSE.

SO IT FALLS TO THE LAOTIANS TO MAKE PEACE FOR THEMSELVES. ONE OF THE LAST CLAUSES OF THE AGREEMENT STATES THAT ALL FOREIGN FORCES MUST LEAVE THE COUNTRY; A "THIS MEANS YOU" CONDITION AIMED AT THE VARIOUS FORCES WHICH OVER THE YEARS HAVE TAKEN UP LAOS' DEFENSE AS THEIR OWN.

AS THE VIEWS FROM CAMBODIA IS GRIM, AT LEAST LAOS IS ONE PART OF INDOCHINA WHICH IS FINALLY WORKING OUT PEACE FOR ITSELF. END QUOTE.  
DEAN

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